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Surface Transportation Board
395 E. Street SW
Washington, DC 20423-0001

Dear Surface Transportation Board,

Greetings! I hope the recipients of this letter are doing well. My name is Jester Jersey and I am interested in serving in a representative capacity on the newly formed Passenger Railroad Advisory Committee, henceforth PRAC, that is being formed by the Surface Transportation Board, henceforth, the Board. I wish to apply for the individual customer representative position for whom will be required to serve an initial two-year term. Enclosed is my contact address above, while my email and phone number, respectively, are as follows, and can be found below:
jjjersey96@gmail.com and (925) 305 - 4796.

The interest I would like to represent on the PRAC is the customer side of advisory. Too often, many interests of rail customers at the consumer level are filtered before they reach advisory levels, where representatives can sometimes be beholden to individuals other than those whose interests they might be representing. Obviously, this is not true in most cases, but committees can be skewed to lean more towards positions of leadership rather than solely positions of customer interests and representation. By applying for the position of individual customer representative and subsequently serving for this position, I can offer PRAC several advantages.

First, I believe selecting an individual customer versus a rail shipper option for this position will make PRAC seem more relatable from a rail passenger perspective because the relationship between member and board would appear to be less transactional as opposed to a shipping representative. I would do my best to represent the needs and best interests of customers as a consumer of rail travel.

Second, keeping in mind the other positions being filled for PRAC, an individual member can seem to be the most representative of the customer level, whether one travels within/between local cities on commuter trains or for more long-distance travel, such as with Amtrak. Most of the other categories being considered comprise five overarching categories that an individual cannot fill due to the level of expertise required of those positions, such as: rail operators, rail funders, freight operators, at-large experts and rail advocate organizations. To a certain extent, an individual member can be seen as part of that latter category, and there can be some overlap with other categories because one can also advocate for their particular sector within the rail industry. However, at the most individual level, my advocacy would come

directly and literally from the heart, not one influenced by any special interest, lobbying group, political body or any other rail advocacy. An individual contributor to PRAC would be invaluable from a micro standpoint because it would be the most least-influenced position due to it being the most independent members of PRAC.

Thirdly, I have no financial conflicts to disclose to the Board, and neither do I lobby on behalf of any other entity in relation to the rail industry. Nor would I advocate only on my best interests, but with the interests of the entire rail industry in mind, both on a macro and micro level, from what is best to serve businesses to that which would also be the most beneficial for the average rail consumer. According to the guidance issued by the Office of Management and Budget(OMB), while federal lobbyists can serve and apply to serve on PRAC, they would have to do so in a representative capacity rather than an individual level. While I would serve as an individual, my representation would not be- I would advocate on what's best for the rail industry as a whole based on the available information I will have at hand during the time my input is needed. I would like to provide a balance for the Board that my position can offer that no other member on the PRAC can provide based on my experiences with the rail industry.

Regarding qualifications, as the membership position I am applying for is that of the customer individual level, I can draw from my vast experiences being a rail customer for more than a dozen years. I grew up in the Bay Area region of California, which began my fondness for train travel. I commuted numerous times throughout the Bay Area through BART, or Bay Area Rapid Transport, to visit family and friends in my youth. Later, when I began attending college, I began riding Amtrak to commute to and from college to visit my family during vacation period from school, eventually graduating to nationwide-traveling as I attended conferences and conventions related to my local advocacy and volunteerism efforts in many major metropolitan areas.

This in turn has afforded me opportunities to travel using intercity rail options to navigate these larger cities, including the Twin Cities of St. Paul/Minneapolis in Minnesota, the suburbs of Boston and Medford in Massachusetts and between Atlanta and Decatur in Georgia in recent years just to name a few. I have enclosed a copy of scans of some of these ticket stubs I've used to for intercity travel.

While my experiences are that of an individual customer, I also wanted to have an influence outside of the train car, besides simply getting from Point A to Point B no matter what rail option I use. On a local level, I have used filled out surveys with BART to improve services. I have been active with options to get involved with improving Amtrak through similar questionnaires. I have even been invited to test a pre-release menu that was eventually launched for the cafe car on the local Capitol Corridor Amtrak commuter trains several years ago.

Lastly, I thought the extent of my influence would only be electronically through surveys and a local taste-test opportunity. However, during a recent national outing on

Amtrak, I was able to connect with regional and even national representatives from Amtrak by phone after being impacted by the national rail accident that occurred near Joplin, Montana on September 25th, 2021. Because of this, I have experiences that the average train rider would not have, including speaking with regional and national Amtrak representatives on a rail issue that not only affected parts of my travel but also made national news headlines, giving me a firsthand look at the inner workings of the rail industry from behind the scenes. This has given me a better appreciation of when things go smoothly, but also the experience of when things are not, and gave me advanced insight far above the average rail passenger. This invaluable experience would serve well for an inaugural committee that wishes to strike a balance between the voices of those who conduct transactional affairs within the rail industry but would also like to glean from the insights of a passenger with extensive travel experience across various localities, who has traveled with several types of rail travel providers and who has no financial interests nor has any hopes to gain any financial advantages by serving on PRAC.

I believe my inclusion into the PRAC will not only provide extensive experience on behalf of customer interests, but serve the rail industry well in its totality. I will do my best to help PRAC address the improvement of “efficiency on passenger rail routes; reduce disputes between passenger rail carriers and freight rail hosts; improve regulatory processes related to intercity passenger rail” and any other effort that will require my expertise as a PRAC member. Therefore, I am stating my willingness to here to serve as a member of PRAC.

I, Jester Jersey, also make this statement to serve in a representative capacity, in order to represent the best interests of the rail industry as a whole, not my personal interests, and will do my best to fulfill the duties of an individual customer representative who will represent the voices of many fellow passengers who use various rail services across the United States of America. Thank you.

Sincerely,
Jester Jersey
(925) 305 - 4796
jjersey96@gmail.com

Metro Train Ticket Stubs I've Used in Recent Travels

1. The new Bay Area Rapid Transport(BART) Clipper Card
 2. The Twin Cities Metro ticket(Twin Cities St. Paul/Minneapolis, MN)
 3. Charlie Ticket in Boston metropolitan area.
 4. Breeze card around the Atlanta, GA metropolitan area
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